



February 2017
The magazine for women.

**SCALE program
aims to help
students learn
about careers**

**Boost your
confidence,
change your
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**Dip into
culinary arts at
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S T E P A C E

The magazine for women.

Editor
Margo Niemeyer

Contributors
AMY CLARK
JANE DEGENEFFEE
MORGAN FELTNER
RONNA LAWLESS
KECIA PLACE-FENCL
JAN RIGGENBACH
KAREN PETERSEN
KAREN SCHWALLER

Photographers
JANE DEGENEFFEE
RONNA LAWLESS
KECIA PLACE-FENCL
JAN RIGGENBACH

FACETS IS A MONTHLY
PUBLICATION OF
GATEHOUSE MEDIA IOWA HOLDINGS.



GateHouse Media®

Publisher
SCOTT ANDERSON

Tribune Editor
MICHAEL CRUMB

ADVERTISERS
To advertise in Facets magazine,
contact Tiffany Hilfiker at
(515) 663-6973

PHONE
(515) 663-6923

ADDRESS
317 Fifth St. Ames, IA, 50010

EMAIL
mniemeyer@amestrib.com

ONLINE
[www.amestrib.com/sections/
special-sections/facets](http://www.amestrib.com/sections/special-sections/facets)

I am very excited about this issue! It is all about becoming more confident in the workplace, becoming a better employee and invaluable to your employer. It all starts with confidence. We have all heard the phrase 'Fake it 'til you make it.' That's not always a bad thing. Obviously, we shouldn't lie about skills we don't have or put things on our resumes that we can't back up. I know from experience that sometimes you have to trick yourself into believing that you can do this and you are the right person for the job — think pep talks in the mirror.

Looking for a job or working toward that promotion — even asking for a raise — can be worrisome and stressful. Take looking for a job for example. One of most common reasons for looking, that I hear from friends, is they went into a field of study that they are just not crazy about anymore and want to do something different. (A reminder, I am a few years out of college, and so are most of my friends.)

Story County Active Learning Experiences is a program for area high school students that lets them meet up with local professionals to learn about certain careers. Some students may find they were on the right track, others may learn more about a career and decided they are just not feeling it and switch focus to another field. Others may be surprised to find they had more interest in a career than they originally thought! I think programs like these are wonderful tools for students who are applying for post-secondary schools and have to fill in that 'Declared Major' box. I can tell you that box scared me the first time I was filling out college applications.

I wish you all the confidence in your current career or on the journey to your next. Even if you have to 'fake it' until it is true.

Angie Dorenkamp, Ames Chamber's director of workforce solutions. Photo by Ronna Lawless/Ames Tribune

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BY JANE
DEGENEFFE
Contributing
Writer

Nest Emporium

Within Ames central movement of commerce we find a nest of homey kitchen goods. Cook's Emporium is a bustling place, as well as a reputable fixture on Main Street. The Ames Cultural District is glad to have Cook's, because it is small enough to feel the heartbeat of home. One can find the rubbery spatula they long for, or the flour sifter they've never had, or dip into actual culinary arts with amazing cookware products and lessons from the weekend demonstrations.

Margaret Junkhan (or Marg, with a hard sounding G) is the proprietor and cooperative consultant of this adventurous little store. Those who pass through, in relation to the traffic of the university, seem to remember the place well and make an annual pilgrimage. Perhaps they are in for a conference, or visiting family, or visiting staff of ISU, but they arrive annually to visit. They stay long and walk slow through the isles of merchandise with whispers of what is new, or what they remember they found there once before. Interestingly, young people new to town happen upon Cook's in the same reverent way! They walk in and stop to look. They venture forth into the isles as if they've certainly come upon something real and good — a culmination of home-ish-ness. They see an environment to learn in and realize a hope to develop a quality lifestyle for their future home.

One can appreciate the quality of Margaret's own life, as well as the shop which enriches others. Margaret takes plenty of time to nest with her own family. Throughout the year there are a few planned vacations. Getting away from the business might also be a vital part of staying at and running the business. She delights in both.

Mary Hillman, of Grand Junction, will, from time to time, bring a dozen or so eggs to the shop for Marg. "Poultry and Produce from the Prairie" is Mary's slogan. The eggs that arrive go home with Marg to share with her husband. Margaret shows a great level of appreciation for their beauty and goodness. Just as when the boxes of merchandise arrive at the back door throughout the week, she delights in the arrival of another good thing to share with others. The



Mary Hillman of Grand Junction, will, from time to time, bring a dozen or so egg to the shop for Marg. Photo by Jane Degeneffe/Contributing Writer



Marg Junkhan stands near the cookie cutter display at her store Cook's Emporium. Photo by Jane Degeneffe/Contributing Writer

knock comes to the door and her greeting of "Hello!" brings in the merchandise from over 200 selected vendors.

Store manager, Vicky Flaws goes to market twice a year with Margaret. Vicky's gentle support, and kind spirit are truly another part of this nesting environment, Cook's Emporium. Since October of 1987, Vicky has worked alongside Margaret doing the hiring of personnel, payroll, ticketing of merchandise, computer work and communications. Her personal love for cooking, and the fun and new ways she finds to make a house into a home, are shared with Margaret. Twice every year, they attend house ware shows in Chicago and Minneapolis. The vendors they finally select for store merchandise come from both regional and international representatives.

■ **Facets:** How long has Cook's Emporium been in business?

Marg: "We've been in this specific building location since 1985. Cook's Emporium started in 1979 and we purchased this building six years later. We had rented spaces until this building came available. We started out small across the street, and then to a space next door. It was a gradually expanding inventory here. We grew with the store."

■ **Facets:** Is there a favorite time of the business year for you?

Marg: "I like Christmas because it's busier, but sometimes it gets to be too busy! Shoving into a box whatever it is the customer thinks they may need for the person they're buying for... But sometimes if people will say they are looking for something and they don't even know what it is, why, then you have an opportunity to help them."

Truly, this "opportunity to help" people is the very nesting material for Cook's Emporium. This long standing cultivation of friends and co-workers, customers and local business relationships have created a center for the nurturing of what people need, a home to live in. Many folks come into the store to revisit after having been away for years. Still others come into the store for the very first time, yet with the same regard for its nest-y feelings. Cook's creates the possibility for "home."

An employee asks, "Can I help you?" and some of the replies reflect this fact.

"No. ... we're just glad we're here."

"No. ... I just have to dream."

Nostalgia never felt so good.

Employee Autumn Jones says that her favorite part of working at the shop is that she's always learning about what makes a business. She enjoys connecting with customers, too, and admires Marg's energy. "She is very customer oriented, and an amazing person to work for."

The people of Ames consider this small, successful store as a landmark of quality cooking supplies. The experience that Margaret Junkhan brings to the store, from both her education as a home economist, and her travels abroad, delight the curious crowds who come for cooking demonstrations on Saturday mornings.

"We started demonstrations almost immediately after the store opened, because people need to see how to do



Cook's Emporium start demonstrations soon after the store opened 'because people need to see how to do things.' Photos by Jane Degeneffe/Contributing Writer

things. A lot of people come on a regular basis. They come to be inspired about something to cook."

■ **Facets:** Do you consider the store a success?

Marg: "I consider it very successful. It's always done well, because it fulfills a need in the community. People need good tools. People spend a lot of time in their kitchens. Preparing food is something people do multiple times a day. Good tools make the job easier, quicker, and a more pleasant thing to do."

The truth is that Margaret Junkhan is a nurturing woman who cares about her customers. Babies are to be acknowledged. Disabilities are to be recognized, and sorrow is to be shared. Marg's simple philosophy about life makes life grand. There can always be a new recipe to discover, or new cooking utensil to put into action for the place we call home. Home is our resting place no matter what, and Margaret has created this possibility to nest for anyone who happens upon Cook's Emporium. There is often something new within the shop that promises to inspire us, and we can be thankful for Margaret's desire to share it with us.



BY RONNA
LAWLESS
Ames Tribune

Dorenkamp is key to SCALE program

Starting next fall, high school students in Story County and Boone will be able to get real-world experience at area businesses through a program called SCALE, which stands for Story County Active Learning Experience.

Student representatives came up with a logo and the name for the group, which is modeled after a similar program, APEX, that has been successful in the Waukee school district.

"All seven school districts in Story County have been in a consortium with DMACC and several area businesses," said Angie Dorenkamp, the Ames Chamber's director of workforce solutions, who has been instrumental in facilitating the collaboration.

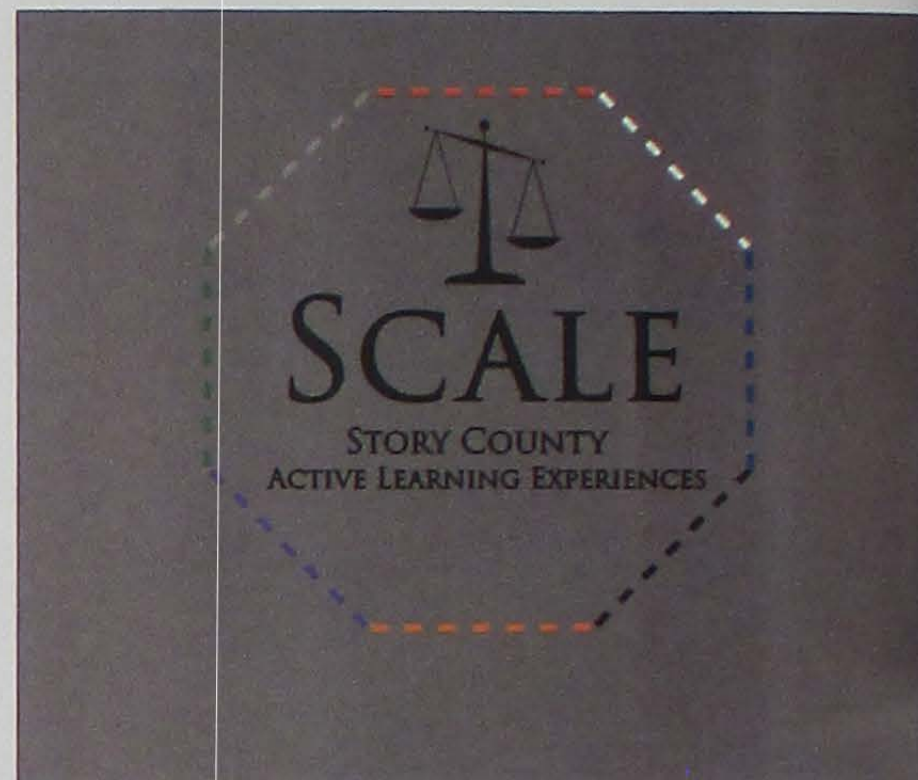
The process for SCALE began more than a year ago when Ballard Superintendent Ottie Maxey learned about Waukee's program and suggested a similar collaboration in Story County. The Ames Chamber of Commerce, all seven Story County school districts and DMACC started working toward making it a reality for area students.

The Boone school district also joined the consortium recently, so now there are eight school districts involved: Ballard, Ames, Roland-Story, Nevada, Gilbert, Collin-Maxwell, Colo-NESCO and Boone.

"The program is open to juniors and seniors who want to learn more about a possible career. It's a great way to expose them to what jobs are like in the real world," Dorenkamp said.



Angie Dorenkamp, Ames Chamber's director of workforce solutions.



Hannah Patton, Principal Steve Schlatter, Mitchell Shorkey and Tristan Balmer from the Roland-Story school district work on a project during a meeting at DLR in Des Moines. *Contributed photo*



Each student in the program will work on projects for local employers as a replacement for some of their normal classroom schedule.

"The students will have real projects to work on," Dorenkamp said. "They won't just be dreamed up for the purpose of an assignment. It will be an authentic experience for the students and their projects will have real impact."

Dorenkamp was a natural choice to facilitate the process, which initially involved roundtable meetings between business leaders and school administrators and faculty.

"I love being able to create quality collaborations for students," she said.

Another example of this process, is a group of college interns who were working in Ames for different companies. Dorenkamp arranged meetings for those interns to meet one another and see various parts of Ames together.

"It was a great opportunity for them to network among themselves and create valuable connections," Dorenkamp said.

Students in the SCALE program will be able to focus on one of four different strands of industry: Engineering; Health and Human Services; Business, Technology and



Communication; and Renewable Energy and Biosciences.

"We want to be able to expose the kids to all the opportunities there are in the business world," Dorenkamp said. "This way, students can commit to the next phase — whether it's a four-year college or a community college or a certificate program — with more perspective on what they're really getting into."

She said the exposure to the real-world side of a career can increase a student's interest in the field. "But it's also valuable if they find out they are not interested in that field after all," she said. "It's better to find that out early, before they have spent years in college studying something and maybe

have a lot of student loan debt."

Dorenkamp's own daughter thought she was interested in pursuing a degree in physical therapy. "So she job shadowed a physical therapist for a day, and when it was over she absolutely didn't want to do that anymore. It just wasn't for her, and that's an important thing to realize before she wasted time and money on school for it."

The SCALE program will be up and running next fall and will be available to all juniors and seniors who are at least 16 years old. "They have to provide their own transportation, just like a real job," Dorenkamp said. "It's part of the learning and will be one of the things they're accountable for."



BY JAN
RIGGENBACH
Contributing
Writer



Some simple tools and a few seed catalogs are all it takes to get a new gardener off to a good start. Photo by Jan Riggenschach/Contributing Writer

Tools are cool but a few will do

My favorite garden tool is a heavy-duty, 60-year-old weeder that originally belonged to my father-in-law.

I was heartsick when I lost the weeder in a pile of mulch one autumn but luckily I found it the next spring, no worse for the wear. Now my husband sprays the wooden handle with bright-colored paint from time to time to make it easier to spot.

Hand tools are all I really need these days to grow my vegetables in raised beds. If necessary, I think my weeder alone would suffice. I use it not only to dig holes for transplants but also, with the long shaft tipped on its side, like a scraper to prepare the soil for seeds.

When I had a large country garden, I had a very nice tiller. The last 10 years, it sat in the barn unused. Why? Because not disturbing the soil turns out to be better for the soil than tilling. It's a win-win, because just pulling the

mulch aside to plant a row is easier on the gardener, too.

Why talk about tools? Because surveys report soaring numbers of new gardeners wanting to learn how to grow and process their own produce. I want all of them to know they can succeed without a lot of fancy tools or machinery.

Here's what I consider indispensable to growing your first food garden:

- A seed catalog, or two, or three. They offer a wealth of information and most are free. (Most companies also list their varieties online, of course, and some are only online. Still, I prefer to plan my new garden while holding a physical catalog and sitting in a comfy chair with a cup of tea on a cold winter night, dreaming of the perfect garden I'm going to grow this year.)

- Something to break up the soil crust. A garden hoe is good if you're gardening in the ground. Any sort of

short-handled cultivator is fine if you plan to garden in pots or raised beds.

- A slow-release organic fertilizer formulated for vegetable gardens.

- A garden hose and/or a watering can and a source of water. Best bet: Rig up a rain barrel to save rainwater for use when the weather turns dry. It's much better for the plants, and after the initial investment it's free.

- Some heavy-duty garden scissors. You'll need them to harvest thick-stemmed vegetables such as squash and peppers. And you'll use them again at the end of the season to chop up tomato vines and other spent plants.

- A shovel or other digging tool to harvest root crops such as carrots and potatoes.

Presuming you search out disease- and pest-resistant varieties when you decide which varieties to plant, you can skip buying pesticides, as well as a sprayer or duster to apply them.



BY KAREN
PETERSEN
Contributing
Writer

WILLPOWER:

The Ultimate Sport

Those of us with “strong willpower” set goals, achieve goals and maintain the results.

How do you know if you have strong willpower? If you are thinking about physical fitness, the amount of weight you lift could measure your “strong.” Is willpower how often you lift those weights?

Financial goals could be strong by the amount of money you want to save. A commitment to save a dollar a month for twelve months is not very strong; a commitment to save \$100 a week for 52 weeks could be a strong commitment. Financial willpower could be measured by the number of weeks you save \$100.

Just about a month ago many of us made New Year resolutions that would demand strong willpower. Are you keeping your resolutions? Are you still on your way to making the changes you committed to on January 1? Or ... have you just run out of willpower?

Social scientists no longer regard “run out of will power” as just a metaphor. They recently reported that willpower is a form of mental energy that is powered by glucose in the blood stream, which is used up as you exert self control. The result is ego depletion. Baumeister¹ and many of his colleagues have concluded the way to keep a New Year’s resolution is to anticipate the limits of your willpower.

A study led by Wilhelm Hoffman of the University of Chicago showed that people with the best self-control are those who use their willpower less often. It appears people who exhibit strong willpower have set up their lives

to minimize temptation.

Here are some strategies to strengthen you willpower:

Set ONE goal: Save \$200 a month.

- Determine the most important goal and focus on that one goal.

- You might want to increase your saving and decrease your waistline — Counting calories, exercise time and dollars will consume your finite supply of willpower. Chose one goal.

Pre-commit to your methods to save \$200 each month.

- Always shop with a list.
- Leave your credit card at home.
- Tell a friend about your \$200 goal — Give them a weekly update. Ask them to remind you if you forget.
- Track your money, use this method to find \$200 a month.
- Record your spending daily.
- Prepare a summary weekly.
- Chart your progress.
- Don’t give up.
- One slip in spending is just one slip.
- Move forward and get right back to your disciplined plan.

Soon you will be proud of your success and recognize that you are one of those people with strong willpower and once learned, that willpower can be used for any goal in life ... because life is ... more than money.

Karen L Petersen CFP® CDFATM is a fee based financial advisor. You can contact her at 515 232 2785 or karen@mymorethanmoney.net

Financial goals could be strong by the amount of money you want to save. A commitment to save a dollar a month for twelve months is not very strong; a commitment to save \$100 a week for 52 weeks could be a strong commitment. Financial willpower could be measured by the number of weeks you save \$100.

¹Unsurprisingly, self-control has become a hot topic, both for scientists interested in understanding the roots of human behavior and for practitioners who want to help people live healthier lives. Roy F. Baumeister, PhD, a social psychologist at Florida State University, is one of the field’s leading researchers.

Tax season opens Jan. 23, and some refunds may be delayed

The IRS will begin accepting 2016 tax returns on Jan. 23, and this year's deadline is April 18 — not 15 — because the deadline arrives on a weekend, and is followed by the Emancipation Day holiday in Washington.

Expect delays in your 2017 refund — due to holidays for Presidents' Day on Feb. 20 and processing times for the federal government and banks. The IRS, for instance, instituted some antifraud measures that may delay millions of refunds until Feb. 27, more than a month after tax-filing season opens, the agency said.

If you're checking for an estimated refund date, you can use the agency's online "Where's My Refund?" tool — located at IRS.gov/refunds — anytime after Feb. 15.

Anyone who claims the earned income tax credit or the additional child tax credit will likely have their refund held until at least Feb. 15.

IRS Commissioner John Koskinen said that taxpayers who file electronically with their own tax software need to have last year's return handy.

"If you're changing tax-software products this filing season, make sure you have a copy of your prior-year return on hand," he said. "You may be asked to enter your 2015 adjusted gross income. This helps verify your identity before you e-file."

The IRS paid refunds on 73 percent of last year's 153 million returns, with refunds averaging \$2,857, Koskinen said, and expects similar numbers this year.

Taxpayers who can't find an answer on IRS.gov can call the IRS at 800-829-1040 Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Taxpayers who can't resolve their issue online or by phone can schedule an appointment at an IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center.

Use the "contact your local office" tool on IRS.gov to find the closest office or call 844-545-5640.

There's also Free File, free tax-preparation software available to those earning less than \$64,000 annually. After Friday, you can download the free software at www.irs.gov/freefile or www.freefilealliance.org

The Free File Alliance is a nonprofit coalition of industry-leading tax-software companies partnered with the IRS to provide free electronic tax services. More than 46 million returns have been filed since the program began in 2003.

BE ON ALERT FOR SCAMMERS LOOKING FOR YOUR REFUND!

Remember, the IRS will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment, especially asking you to use a prepaid debit card, gift card, or wire transfer. Generally, the IRS will first mail you a bill if you owe any taxes.

- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

- Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount it says you owe.

- Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone. Don't hand those over.

Scammers calling with aggressive and threatening demands for taxes are criminals impersonating IRS agents — and they remain a major threat for American taxpayers. Variations of the IRS impersonation scam continue year-round and tend to peak when scam artists find prime opportunities to strike — like tax season. Don't become a victim — just hang up.

VANGUARD UPDATE

Rising interest rates may bring pain in the short term, but Vanguard newsletter writer and adviser Dan Wiener still likes Vanguard's Short-Term Investment-Grade and Intermediate-Term Investment-Grade bond funds, rather than the Treasury-heavy Total Bond Market Index.

And as long as the economy remains strong, the Vanguard High-Yield Corporate bond fund is also "a terrific option. Many questioned me when I recommended we buy the fund at the end of September 2011. But through the end of this past year, High-Yield Corporate has brought us a total return of 45.3 percent, four times the 11.6 percent return for Total Bond Market Index over the same period, making it the single best bond fund among Vanguard's stable by a factor of two or more."

Wiener also owns Vanguard Health Care, down 9.0 percent in 2016 and lagging its in-house index competition — Vanguard Health Care ETF only dropped 3.2 percent. It was the worst-performing Vanguard fund for much of the year.

"I'm certainly not happy with that performance, but allow me to reaffirm my conviction in this holding," he added. Health-care spending currently runs at just under 18 percent of GDP, and will represent a bit more than 28 percent of GDP by 2041.

Portfolio manager Jean Hynes and the team at Wellington Management "won't outperform the index every year, but with all the innovations and potential regulatory changes coming, I'd rather have Hynes and her team picking the winners from the losers than just blindly buying all health-care stocks," Wiener noted.

Lastly, it's not too late to contribute to your retirement account. How much is enough? Fidelity offers a guideline for retirement savings that suggests you put away eight times your annual income by the time you hit age 67 to have a shot at 85 percent of your preretirement annual income. So, if you're earning \$65,000 per year at age 67, you'd have \$520,000 put away.

Where your money goes: How to read your pay stub

finance

BY BARRI SEGAL
GoBankingRates.
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Tribune News
Service

Most people might think of their paychecks as one thing only: money in the bank. However, a paycheck stub contains valuable information that could help you improve your money management skills.

Although companies print different types of paychecks, there are some common details that are required by law. Typically, a pay stub will include the following information: gross pay, net pay, federal and state tax withholdings, Social Security and Medicare deductions, and your year-to-date totals for your earnings and deductions. Here's exactly what information you'll find on a pay stub and what it all means for you.

WHAT IS A PAY STUB?

Your pay stub is the part of a paper paycheck that you keep after you cash or deposit the check. Typical information that appears on your pay stub includes the number of hours you worked during the pay period, the gross and net amount you made, a breakdown of the taxes you paid and a list of tax deductions.

GROSS PAY VS. NET PAY

You might be confused about the difference between your gross earnings and net pay. Gross pay is the total amount of income you earned during a pay period, which is typically one month or two weeks. Gross pay doesn't factor in your tax withholdings, like federal income tax.

Net pay is the amount of income that you actually take home after all your taxes and withholdings have been deducted, which includes your federal tax deductions. In other words, net pay is the actual amount of money that you deposit in the bank.

HOW TO READ YOUR PAY STUB

The different numbers on your paycheck might seem mysterious if you don't know what they represent. Here's a full breakdown of a pay stub so you can understand exactly what information is on yours.

■ **Employer/Company Address:** The name and address of your employer

■ **Employee No.:** Your unique ID number at your place of employment; employee ID numbers are useful for distributing payroll because they give payroll managers an easy way to distinguish between employees that requires fewer characters than writing out names.

■ **Employee Name:** Your name

■ **Social Security No.:** Your Social Security number

■ **Period Beg.:** Date the pay period began; "Beg." stands for "beginning."

■ **Period Ends:** Date the pay period ended

■ **Check Date:** Date the check was issued

■ **Earnings:** Shows what type of income you received; in this case, it's regular pay, which means there's no overtime or other type of wage included.

■ **Hours:** If you're an hourly employee, this will reflect the number of hours you worked during the pay period. If you're a salaried employee, this field will be blank.

■ **Rate:** Shows your hourly rate and the number of hours you worked if you're an hourly employee; if you're salaried, your hours default to 40 hours per week. It also includes your overtime if you're an hourly employee, and any bonuses or commissions for the pay period.

■ **Current Amount:** Amount you've earned during the pay period before withholding and deductions have been taken out.

■ **Withholding/Deductions:** Shows what taxes — including federal and state taxes — were taken from your gross earnings for inclusion on your W-2; your company must report all employer taxes to the government. The government will withhold three taxes from your pay: Social Security, Medicare and your W-2 withholding tax.

■ **Current Amount:** How much was put toward your withholdings and deductions during the pay period; if you're paid monthly, it shows your month-to-date withholdings and deductions.

■ **Year to Date:** Refers to refers to

the period extending from the beginning of the year to the present — the figure represents your total wages and deductions during that time period.

■ **Current Amount:** Reflects your gross earnings during the pay period before any withholding and deductions have been taken out.

■ **Current Deductions:** Amount of deductions — possibly including 401(k) or other retirement savings plan contributions — taken out during the pay period

■ **Net Pay:** Amount of take-home pay, or your pay after tax, after all deductions have been taken out

■ **YTD Earnings:** Amount of total earnings for the year to date, from the first of the calendar year up to and including the pay stub's pay period.

■ **YTD Deductions:** Amount of total deductions from the first of the calendar year up to and including the pay stub's pay period

■ **YTD Net Pay:** Amount of total net pay earnings from the first of the calendar year up to and including the pay stub's pay period

■ **Check Number:** The check number for the specific payment

SAVE YOUR PAY STUBS

If you need more help reading your paycheck stub or if a particular calculation doesn't seem correct, get assistance from your HR department. Your pay stub contains important pieces of information and it's important that you understand each piece. It's also crucial that you check your stub to make sure it's accurate — and let your employer know if there are any mistakes.

Paycheck stubs serve as proof of income, and government agencies, lenders and landlords often request them to verify your earnings. A pay stub contains all your income information, so it's a great tool for tracking your salary, the taxes you've paid, insurance premium amounts, bonus information, and vacation and overtime pay. It's important to save your pay stubs in case you need them for anything that requires income verification.



BY MORGAN
FELTNER
Contributing
Writer

Boost your confidence, change your life

When you think about what makes you feel confident what comes to mind? My train of thought starts with a “power” outfit, one that makes me look professional, stylish, and comfortable. This is usually a pattern collared shirt, my favorite pair of skinny jeans, with some booties to dress it up. Secondly, walking into work, an appointment or just anywhere on time. I feel the best equipped when I can arrive to my destination with time to spare to ensure I can gather all my apples before completely engaging in a new task. One last thing that is sure to boost my confidence is taking the time to do my makeup, styling my hair, and knowing I’ve put my best self together for the day.

With a great outfit, a few minutes to spare, and a few words whispered to myself, I’m reminded today is going to be a good day. Whatever it takes to get you ready for the day, you might want to start considering yourself a little more. Giving yourself a boost of confidence in the morning can dramatically improve the outcome of your day. When you feel confident, often times our performance in daily tasks, work and relationships flourish. Self-confidence can turn a day full of “to-do’s” into a day



Set an intention for the day • Make a plan • Self-care Work out • Give yourself words of affirmation

full of productivity marking off everything on that list. Some days we're stretched too thin between social engagements, work, and family. It's vitally important to perform a self-check once in a while to ensure that our "cups are full," if you will.

A confident woman in the work place can boost overall morale, motivate others to up their game, and increase problem solving productivity. When you feel confident you know that you're capable of the task at hand. This shows when you're faced with a new project, or assignment and you jump right in without hesitation or second guessing yourself. On days we're lacking in self-confidence, the thoughts of comparison to others and "what if I make a mistake?" cause distractions and take away from our productivity.

Some studies show that when we aren't worried about our physical appearance, we are able to focus more of our energy into efficiently completing almost double the tasks. Along with all the reasons women are invaluable in the work place, I think that's one to add to the list. Whether your resolution was to be more organized, make healthy lifestyle changes, be more charitable, or take more time for self-care, boosting your confidence should be a part of this plan. Here are five ways you can care for yourself today.

Things that boost confidence

■ **Setting an intention for the day** — when you have a purpose, personal mission, or intention for each day is a great way to keep yourself in check each day. Many people do this by choosing a daily bible verse, a word of inspiration or focus, or a mantra type phrase. This give you a tool to help re-center and refocus throughout the day.

■ **Making a plan** — Establishing a game plan for your day as part of a daily routine can eliminate most of the stresses we face. Even if there are many tasks that come

up while at work, school, or just running through the day having an initial "to-do" list can help structure any surprises into our already managed time.

■ **Self-care** — Taking time to release stress and pamper yourself is always needed from time to time, when in reality we'd function better if self-care was a regular activity. Attending a yoga class, having a glass of wine, or taking a trip to the salon are all great ways to de-stress. In my last article, you might've been inspired to make some beauty routine changes. Visiting a salon will not only refresh your look, but finding a stylist that uses wholesome, organic, or natural products is one way to boost yourself from the inside out. Sometimes life doesn't allow us that much time to ourselves. On those days a warm cup of tea, turning up your favorite song, or just a few deep breaths can significantly help refocus and re-charge your mood and energy.

■ **Working out** — It's not much of a surprise that when you keep a consistent workout schedule our bodies function better. Along with numerous health benefits, its proven that when we feel good we look good and our confidence is often pretty strong. I've read the articles about a glass of wine being as beneficial as 30 minutes of cardio, and the research behind that is lacking. Experts still say that getting out and moving is the best way to exercise the body as a whole. Keeping up with some resolutions to take the stairs more often, keep in mind that there are a million little ways to sneak in some steps.

■ **Words of affirmation, to yourself** — A great day starts inside your head with positive thoughts. We are our own worst critics, and retraining our brains to be kind and patient with ourselves can make a big difference in how we handle the day. Happiness, success, peace of mind, enjoyable social interactions, and a more meaningful life can all be achieved by practicing words of affirmation to yourself. That's right, building up your own perception of yourself by complimenting all the wonderful things about you has the power to completely change your day.



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AT-0000921610-04

BY KECIA
PLACE-FENCL
Contributing
Writer

Staying fit at work

So many of us spend most of our day sitting behind a desk at work, but it doesn't have to be that way all day long. Use your work breaks or free time to get up and move. Keep a pair of exercise shoes and two paper plates at your desk, so you can use your breaks to get fit.

Choose one of these two short fitness routines to incorporate into your work day to keep you on the road to health and wellness.

Cardio:

■ **Jacks:** Set your timer to one minute. Do as many jumping jacks as you can in that one minute. The more jacks you do, the more calories you burn.

■ **Stair climbers:** Set your timer to one minute. Go up and down a set of stairs as many times as you can in that minute. Move quickly and safely to get the most bang for your buck.

■ **Jump Squats:** Set your timer for 30 seconds (building up to 1 minute). Standing with feet hips distance apart and toes pointing forward, push the hips back and down (toward the floor) as you squat down try to get your knees at a 90 degree angle while keeping your knees above your ankles. Touch both hands to the floor between your feet and jump straight up getting your feet off the floor. As you land your feet back to the floor, keep the feet hips distance apart, toes pointing forward, and drop your hips back down getting your knees to 90 degree angles as both of your hands touch the floor between your feet. Continue this exercise as fast as you can while maintaining good form. The more jump squats you do, the more calories you burn.

■ **Mountain Climbers:** Start in the push-up position (or plank position) with your hands on the floor directly under your shoulders, your feet hips

distance apart, and one paper plate under each toe. Without shifting your hips, pull your right knee under your body straight up to your right elbow, push that right foot back to the plank position, then pull the left knee under your body straight up to your left elbow before pushing that left foot back to the plank position. Continue to alternate your legs under your body to simulate climbing a mountain (running) under your body for 30 seconds (building up to 1 minute). Try to keep your hips level and parallel to the floor throughout this exercise. The more mountains you climb, the more calories you burn.

■ **Swimmer Arms:** Start by laying on your stomach with one hand on each paper plate. Pretend that you are doing the breaststroke in swimming by pushing your hands up the middle, circling them out and bringing them back up the middle. Repeat this movement for 30-60 seconds before reversing the movement. Now move your hands out in a circle and bring them down the middle for 30-60 seconds. As you do both of these movements, lifting your toes off of the floor will activate muscles in your low back and arms simultaneously, challenging more muscle groups. Swim as quickly as you can to burn more calories.



If time allows during your break, complete the above routine one more time before heading back to work. If you only have time for part of it, complete what you can. The more you do, the more calories you burn.

Strength builder:

■ **Tricep dips:** Using a chair that doesn't move, place your hands on the edge of the chair with your glutes hovering in front of the chair. Bend at the elbow lowering your glutes in front of the chair until your elbows are at a 90 degree angle and then use your arm strength to straighten your arms again (without locking them out in the completely straight arm position). Complete 10-15 repetitions of the tricep dips before going on to the next exercise.

■ **Squats:** Standing with feet hips distance apart and toes pointing forward, push the hips back and down (toward the floor) as you squat down try to get your knees at a 90 degree

Tricep dips can be done off any stationary chair or bench to build arm strength. Photo by Kecia Place-Fencl/Contributed photo



Side plank is an easy way to build your core strength without needing equipment. Photo by Kecia Place-Fencil/Contributing Writer

angle while keeping your knees above your ankles. Complete 10 to 15 repetitions of the squats before going on to the next exercise.

■ **Plank:** To get into plank position, start by laying on the floor face down and place your elbows on the floor directly under your shoulders. Tuck your toes under you on the floor and lift your hips up off the floor maintaining a straight line with your body from head to toe. Do not let your low back sag or arch in this position. You can be on your elbows or hands while holding plank. Build up your strength until you can hold plank position for one continuous minute, then go on to the next exercise.

■ **Side Plank:** To get into side plank position, start by laying on the floor on your right side. Place your right elbow on the floor directly under your shoulder. Lift your hips up off the floor, maintaining a straight line with your body from head to toe. If you need to support yourself with your left hand, try not to rotate too far forward as you want to keep your shoulders stacked on top of each other the best that you can. You can be on your elbow or hand while holding side plank. Build up your strength until you can hold plank for one continuous minute. After you have completed the side plank on the right side, follow the same procedures for the left side, then go on to the next exercise.

■ **Lunges:** Stand in a split stance position where the left foot is forward and the right foot is back. Lower your body down to the floor so you are kneeling on the floor with your left and right legs bent so both legs are at a 90 degree angle. Tuck the toe of the right foot and lift yourself straight up using only your legs. Keep your left knee directly over your left ankle, keep your chest lifted so your shoulders stay directly over your hips as you move up and down using only your legs. Complete 10 to 15 repetitions with the left foot forward, then switch so your right leg is forward. Set yourself up the same way as described above with the right leg forward and complete the same number of repetitions with the right leg forward before going on to the next exercise.

■ **Push-ups:** Start in plank position with your hands on the floor directly under your shoulders. Lower your chest toward the floor by bending your elbows out to the sides to create a goal post position with your arms. As you lower your chest toward the floor, try to achieve 90 degree angles in your elbows before pushing yourself back up to plank position by straightening your arms without locking them out. Complete 10 to 15 repetitions before going to the next exercise.

If time allows during your break, complete the above routine one more time before heading back to work. If you only have time for part of it, complete what you can.

Take advantage of the time that you have. Burn those calories, improve your cardio fitness and build strength. After all, the workplace doesn't have to be a place that you just sit at your desk and remain sedentary. Get up, move and let it be contagious. Encourage your co-workers to join you and before you know it, everyone in the office will be fit.

****Before you begin any exercise routine, you should consult your doctor.**

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BY KAREN
SCHWALLER
Contributing
Writer

The Unexpected Guest

Here on the farm, we experience all kinds of guests. The neighbors who need our help — or a listening ear; feed and seed sales people, agronomists, grain buyers, fuel delivery people, salesmen selling aerial pictures of our farm, and well-dressed people who want us to be saved.

But this particular guest was a true stinker, and a mysterious problem.

It was your average Monday. We were in the process of building a new home, so my husband had been spending a little time over there as construction continued. When I called him up that morning I heard him tell someone quietly, "Watch out — there's a skunk down there, so don't get him mad."

Yes, a skunk had found its way into the basement. With the house fairly open yet, we didn't know if he made himself at

home and walked down the living room steps during the night, or if he had fallen into the 10-foot hole that would someday be other steps leading to the basement. It would figure that a skunk could survive a fall like that.

Amazingly, there were no volunteers to approach it from behind and try to grab it behind the head, since we heard they couldn't spray in that situation. So we had to do the best we could from above to avoid a foul-smelling, skunk-driven stand-off that would have matched anything ever done by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

We could have used any of those three commodities to help us through the trauma.

During this process, it was plain to see that I would not have made the kind of pioneer woman I'd always thought I could have been. It gave me the willies just to look at that oversized rodent up close. And seeing it in our new house that we hadn't even lived in yet? Man, oh man.

Our farm troubleshooting skills were tested as the crowd of onlookers grew. My husband first tried funneling some exhaust fumes down to it for a time, but had no luck. We heard brake cleaner inhalation would work, but still no luck.

Our guys fixed up a covered live trap and lowered it into the hole, and the skunk brazenly walked in and out of it in an outright display of righteous haughtiness...laughing at our apparent ignorance in trying to think the way skunks think.

They also lowered a pie pan into the stairwell hole — the pan

containing some cola and fly bait — the miracle potion which keeps raccoons from feasting on sweetcorn patches.

Still, goose eggs.

We went over there at 10 p.m. that night to check on the status, but the skunk was still walking around. Amazingly, it had not yet sprayed. That in itself was a miracle, since we were sure he was as unhappy about being among us as we were that he had taken up residency in our new house before we even had a chance to put up the mailbox.

We left, dejected and defeated by an animal that was much smaller than us, but who had far

more power to keep lecherous relatives and zucchini-bearing neighbors away than we did.

The next morning as we drove to the house, I sucked in my share of oxygen as I resembled a dog on a truck ride with his head stuck out the window (except without all the slobber) trying to detect that pungent smell of our unwanted four-legged guest. No skunk smell. It was almost too much to imagine.

To our relief — the skunk was lifeless, the pan of magic potion nearly half gone. The skunk had finally been skunked — our troubleshooting was successful. A scoop shovel hauled it away, powered by much braver hands now that it was closer to becoming turkey vulture food.

Unbelievably through it all, our house remained unscathed in the ways of foul odors. I wish I could say that for what awaits it in the future. The laundry scent isn't very fresh come lambing and calving time, but at least we'll expect that.



BY MEGHAN LEAHY
Special to the Washing-
ton Post



The device dilemma: When a child gets a tech device, what should parents do to protect them?

Question:

My 9-year-old got a tablet for Christmas, and we're trying to figure out what the rules will be, especially with school back in session. I see you posting about screens a lot on your Facebook page, particularly when it comes to your own daughters. Do you have hard-and-fast rules? General guidelines?

Answer:

Welcome to the rest of your parenting life with this struggle.

I could give you a million hard-and-fast rules, but here is the only absolute truth: You will work at this until the children leave the house.

You can buy many great books and take great courses about technology and children, but that doesn't change the fact that your child received a gift that requires near-constant diligence and flexibility and some faith from you.

In terms of guidelines, even the American Academy of Pediatrics is amending its suggestions because the tech has changed so quickly from simple TV watching. There are many studies being conducted, and here are just a few of the topics: effects on children's brains, gaming addiction (which I believe we will see in the Diagnostic and Statistical

Manual of Mental Disorders in the near future), social media, attention-related issues, obesity, decision-making, hand-eye coordination and sleep.

Essentially, we created technology and unleashed it on our children, and now we are sprinting to understand what it is doing to them.

So to cut through the noise, I am going to focus on what I care about, study, and have spent my life thinking about and working on: connection between parent (caregiver) and child.

Am I doom and gloom when it comes to tech and children? No, I love it. When it comes to connection, nothing in our lives connects us more than technology. It brings together families separated by location, divorce and military duties. It gives us a way to communicate with our children when we don't know where they are. It helps children on the fringes of culture find their tribes. It cultivates interests and fosters creativity.

Is my house constantly connected? No. Like everything wonderful, technology has a dark side. Aside from gaming addiction and social-media worries, I am keenly aware that the intrinsic nature of technology is that your head is bent down, your eyes staring into a screen. Into a virtual world. Into

Device, page 22

DEVICE Continued from page 21

images fake and real. If one of the most important aspects of being human is our connection to other humans and nature, most technology works at direct odds to this. It steals our eyes. It steals our attention. It steals our ability to focus on what is in front of us.

For children, who are immature and have poor impulse control, the seduction of this virtual world is too great to resist.

My job, your job — every adult's job — is to toe the line. We can create rules, set up parental controls, buy complicated routers, buy apps that shut down and moderate tech use, and generally police the heck out of our children to help them with self-control until they mature, but nothing substitutes a strong parent-child relationship.

So what do I do about technology in my house?

1. I held off on tablets, smartphones and personal computers as long as I could. It felt like the right time to get a smartphone for my oldest child when she went to middle school. She was mature enough to not lose or break it, and I mostly trusted her. The work, really, became mine. No matter how many contracts, charts and rules I create, I still have to be aware of where her technology is. All of the time. I allowed tablets at about 9 years old, and because my youngest child always feels left out, she is allowed to borrow my phone to play a game or two. This is a huge pain for me, but it is less of a pain than if I had to chase her around the house snatching a device that I gave to her.

2. Be prepared to hear all about what other kids are getting and able to do with their technology. To hear it from my children, all of their friends were born holding iPhones and have been on Instagram since they were 2 years old. This is ridiculous and untrue, but it can easily plant an insecure seed in your parenting mind. You can even begin to believe that you are hurting your child. You aren't. Get a mantra going: "Every family does things differently. This is how we do it." They will whine and throw fits and feel tortured. It is okay. They will live. Stick to your parenting values.

3. Be prepared to learn about new games and apps and social media, while always knowing that you will fall grievously short of knowing everything. There is no way for you to keep up. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try. I have had my 12-year-old teach me Snapchat about 100 times; we actually have had some really great laughs about it.

4. Be prepared to change the rules based on your child's immaturity, development, executive-functioning issues, attention issues, sleep issues, bullying, distraction from school and

family, nature deprivation, lack of creative play. Whatever rules you create will not stay that way. Accept it.

5. Don't take it personally when there's blow-back from the boundaries you place on technology. If you set boundaries and punish your children for their reactions, you are going to have a fairly strained (read: horrible) relationship with your child. You need to be the adult and realize that you are doing what needs to be done. Complain to your partner, your friends, the person in the grocery line, but don't blame your children for wanting to keep the technology you gave them.

6. Have a day in the week that is free of technology. We do cell-free Sundays, which include no smartphones, computers or TV. Football is allowed because, well, double standards. It was not well received in the beginning but is now part of the family routine, and it is lovely.

7. This next piece of advice may surprise some, but a dear friend who has two teens and one middle-schooler said this to me: "Meghan, unless you suspect real danger or have real concerns, do not read your child's texts on a daily basis. It will erode the good trust you have with your child, promote sneakiness in your child and create a 'gotcha' atmosphere in your family." Do I still glance at texts, Instagram and Snapchat? Yes. But I tell my child when I do it and what I learned, and then I go into listening mode. The main message is: "I care. I am watching. I know your heart. I love you. You will make mistakes. I will always be here for you. I am listening." But again, the longer you can wait to put texting into a child's hands, the better. Because the more mature they are when this starts, the more they will be able to handle the pressures of being online.

8. Unless there is a compelling reason, do not allow your children to charge their devices in their bedrooms. They will say it is for an alarm, they will say it is easier, they will scream that you don't trust them. Keep your boundary. Children are already losing sleep at alarming rates, and having technology in their bedrooms only increases their awake time and distractibility and allows more time for shenanigans.

9. Recognize that, as a culture, we are not moving backward. Technology is here to stay. But your parental influence is crucial. Are you always on technology? Do you get outside? Do you have friends over to see them face to face? Do you read real books and newspapers? Do you engage in conversation with strangers? Before you ever go about fixing your children, be sure to get your own technology life in line. Yes, we adults have work and obligations, but be sure to walk some of the walk if you are going to talk the talk.

Some basic Italian we all can use

savor

BY ELLIE KRIEGER
Special to the Washington Post

If you have been eyeing the bunches of broccoli rabe in your grocery store but passing them by because you are unsure how to cook this vegetable, here is your official cue to pick some up and discover something powerfully delicious and healthful.

The accompanying recipe is like Broccoli Rabe 101: a basic preparation all cooks should have in their back pockets to serve as a side for just about any Italian-style main, from pastas and pizzas to chicken piccata; to be piled on panini; or to be chopped and cooked into frittatas.

Broccoli rabe, also called rapini, is a more intensely flavorful, even more nutrient-packed cruciferous cousin of regular broccoli. Despite its name and appearance, it's not a type of broccoli but is more closely related genetically to turnip greens. Broccoli rabe has a mustardlike bitterness that becomes a mouthwatering taste dimension once mellowed by blanching the vegetable briefly before sauteing it with garlic in olive oil. That's all it takes to make this dish, which is an Italian restaurant standard and a staple in my home.

Although I typically avoid boiling vegetables in favor of steaming them - the more contact with water they have, the more water-soluble nutrients are lost - I make an exception for broccoli rabe. Steaming doesn't temper the bitterness quite enough for my taste. Just a minute in boiling water followed by a brief ice-water bath does the trick, and it is a step you can conveniently do several days in advance.

Interestingly, salting the water helps prevent nutrients from leaching out by creating a more even osmotic balance, but some salt will then be absorbed, so if you are watching sodium, cooking the broccoli rabe in unsalted water is fine. Either way, I figure you get more nutrients from a deliciously tasty vegetable eaten with abandon than from one that's not. This recipe is definitely the former, and a classic for a reason.

SAUTEED BROCCOLI RABE

4 to 6 servings (makes 3 cups), Healthy

MAKE AHEAD: The broccoli rabe can be blanched, cooled, drained and refrigerated up to 4 days in advance.

From nutritionist and cookbook author Ellie Krieger.

Ingredients

2 tablespoons sea salt, plus 1/2 teaspoon (see headnote)

1 large bunch broccoli rabe (about 1 pound)

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 large clove garlic, thinly sliced

Generous pinch crushed red pepper flakes

Steps

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add the 2 tablespoons of salt (see headnote). Fill a large mixing bowl with cool water and ice cubes. Line a large plate with a few layers of paper towels.

Trim off and discard about an inch from the ends of the broccoli rabe stems, then add the vegetable to the boiling water. Once the water returns to a boil, cook for 1 minute, then use tongs to transfer the vegetable to the ice-water bath just long enough to cool it completely. Transfer the vegetable to the plate.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Once the oil shimmers, add the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds, stirring until it is just beginning to turn golden. Add the blanched broccoli rabe, the remaining 1/2 teaspoon of salt and the crushed red pepper flakes; cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until the vegetable is warmed through and tender.

Serve warm.

Sauteed Broccoli Rabe. Photo by
Goran Kosanovic/Washington Post

Just the thing to bake for the new year's 'lean' season

I don't care what the poets say about April being the cruelest month: I know they're wrong. For bakers, the cruel month is January. It's the month when food magazine pictures go from whipped cream cakes to detox teas. A few weeks ago, everyone resolved to go on a diet, and now, even if your nearest and dearest will eventually eat what you've baked, they'll put up a fuss before they do. It'll all be over by Valentine's Day, but until then — arrgh.

Because I bake for a bunch of reasons, among them that I love the process, love having homemade treats in the house and love sharing them, I bake through this "lean" season. And while I mostly just go on my merry way, baking what I want to bake, I make a concession when my dinner guests are dieters. Instead of the usual cakes, tarts or small custards, either I go for cookies, leaving it to my friends to find their own resistance level, or I make it easy on them and serve these cocoa cupcakes, one-to-a-plate treats that are (super-reasonable and) delicious in their unadorned state and (only slightly less reasonable and) even better served with yogurt.

The easiest way to describe these is to say they're like mini devil's food cakes. They get their deep flavor from cocoa powder. (Because almost all the fat has been removed from the dried cacao solids and nothing has been added, whatever you make with cocoa powder has a pure chocolate flavor.) The cupcakes get a touch of tang and a lot of their tenderness from buttermilk. And they get a base note of flavor from cinnamon, which loves chocolate the way milk loves cookies.

TAKEAWAY TIPS

■ Like confectioners' sugar, cocoa powder can clump, so even lazy bakers (like moi) have to give in and sift it. Measure, then sift or strain it into the bowl that's holding the flour. Add the cinnamon, baking powder and baking soda, and whisk everything together to blend completely.

■ The cupcakes are made in regular-size muffin pans. Even when the pans are nonstick, I like to line the wells with paper cupcake papers (or to give them a spray of cooking oil or swish of butter). Cupcakes in papers look cute, rise evenly and help make cleanup a snap.

■ Give the butter, sugar and salt a good beating, and then add the eggs one by one. Don't worry if the mixture curdles (as it probably will, even if you were an obedient baker and let the eggs come to room temperature). Everything will smooth out once the dry stuff goes in.

■ So that all your cupcakes will be the same size and bake through at the same time, use a cookie scoop to measure out the batter. If you fill a large scoop (one with a capacity of three tablespoons) with batter and level it against the side of the mixing bowl, you'll get exactly a dozen cupcakes.

■ If you make the simple yogurt topping for the cupcakes, prepare it before you start the cocoa batter. You need to drain the yogurt for at least 1 hour and then, after you've added the sugar and vanilla, you need to chill it, so give yourself a head start. You can get this done a day ahead if you're a planner type.

■ The topping is soft and, unlike frosting, won't hold its shape for very long; best to spoon it over the cupcakes when you're ready to serve them. Alternatively, you can turn the cupcakes and topping into a spoonable dessert: split the cupcakes from top to bottom, put them in a bowl and top with the yogurt mix. Sprinkles are optional.

I've chosen a straightforward name for these, but you could just as easily dub them Have Your Cake and Eat It, Too, Cupcakes.

DORIE GREENSPAN'S COCOA CUPCAKES

12 servings

MAKE AHEAD: These are best eaten the day they are made, but they can be kept covered tightly at room temperature for up to 1 day or frozen for up to 2 months. The yogurt for the optional topping needs to drain for at least 1 hour (and up to 1 day in advance). The topping can be refrigerated a day in advance.

From cookbook author Dorie Greenspan.

■ Ingredients

For the topping (optional)

1 cup plain nonfat Greek-style yogurt

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 cup confectioners' sugar

Pinch salt

Sprinkles, for finishing

For the cupcakes

1 cup flour

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (may use Dutch-process cocoa powder)

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon baking soda

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature

- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup regular or low-fat buttermilk, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup mini chocolate chips (optional)

■ Steps

To make the optional topping: Line a fine-mesh strainer with damp cheesecloth or a double thickness of damp paper towels and set it over a bowl. Spoon the yogurt into the strainer, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour (or for up to 1 day). One hour before you want to use the topping, spill whatever liquid has accumulated out of the bowl and wipe the bowl dry. Scrape the yogurt into the bowl, then whisk in the vanilla extract, confectioners' sugar and salt. Cover and refrigerate (for up to 1 day).

For the cupcakes: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Drop paper cupcake liners into a 12-cup muffin pan, or grease the wells with cooking oil spray.

Place the flour in a bowl. Sift the cocoa powder over the flour, then add the cinnamon, baking powder and baking soda. Stir to incorporate.

Combine the butter, granulated sugar and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer or handheld electric mixer; beat on medium speed for about 3 minutes or until smooth. Stop to scrape down the bowl. On medium speed, add the eggs one at a time, beating for a minute between each addition, then add the vanilla extract. (Don't be concerned if the mixture looks curdled.)

Reduce the speed to low and add half of the flour mixture. Once that is almost incorporated, add all the buttermilk and, once that is incorporated, follow with the remaining flour mixture. When the batter is smooth, mix in the chips, if you're using them.

Divide the batter evenly among the paper liners or greased muffin wells. (Dorie Greenspan uses a large cookie scoop, with a capacity of about 3 tablespoons, for this job.)

Bake (middle rack) the cupcakes for 18 to 21 minutes or until they are peaked and puffed and spring back when pressed lightly; a tester inserted into the center of the cupcakes will come out clean. Transfer to a wire rack (in the pan); let them cool to room temperature — or don't: These are good warm, unadorned.

If you've opted for the topping, apply just before serving, either on top or thinly spread over cupcake halves (split top to bottom). Decorate with sprinkles, if desired.





Salmon Breakfast Strudel. Photo by Susan Selasky/Detroit Free Press/TNS

Test Kitchen recipe: Breakfast dish uses leftover ingredients

When it's cold out, certain foods can brighten the mood.

This breakfast salmon strudel was just what I was looking for. But first off, don't let the word strudel stop you in your tracks. There's no making your own strudel dough, and the labor intensive rolling and stretching by hand that goes along with it.

This strudel is made using phyllo dough, which makes it a lot easier. Using the phyllo, while not the same as some traditional strudel, gives you crisp flaky layers.

Yes, it's like working with pieces of wet tissue paper, but the beauty is even if you mess up, melted butter fixes mistakes.

I was armed with about half a roll of phyllo in the freezer eager to use it up. The rest was also easy because I had plenty of eggs and some smoked salmon planned for appetizers that didn't get made.

The original name of this recipe, Breakfast Salmon Strudel, is a little misleading. While it's terrific for breakfast, it's also ideal as a brunch dish, lunch or

dinner served with some mixed greens. As a brunch dish you can assemble these up to 12 hours in advance. When you're ready to serve, just pop them in the oven and bake for minutes.

There's one caveat with this recipe: overcooking the eggs. Just like hard-cooked eggs can have a green or grayish tinge when overcooked, so can scrambled eggs. While they may look unappetizing, the green tinged eggs, sources say, are safe to eat.

Beside overcooking, having the heat too high and holding the cooked eggs for too long can cause the color change. To prevent this all together, whisk in a small amount of lemon juice into the raw eggs before scrambling. Also, use a rubber spatula when cooking the eggs to gently stir and push the soft curds toward the center as they cook.

With today's recipe, be sure to undercook the egg scramble because it continues to cook in the oven.

The bright citrusy flavors in the Lemon Chive Sauce is a great match for the eggs and salmon encased in the phyllo. This month plenty of citrus starts rolling in. It's the one bright spot in the produce section during the doldrums of winter.

The chive sauce is similar to a hollandaise sauce — minus the egg. However, you can easily skip making the sauce and instead use a packet of hollandaise sauce mix.

SMOKED SALMON BREAKFAST STRUDELS

Makes: 4 / Preparation time: 40 minutes / Total time: 1 hour, 40 minutes

8 large eggs
2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
8 sheets phyllo pastry
4 ounces smoked salmon, cut into thin strips
or prices

1 tablespoon chopped chives
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest

LEMON CHIVE SAUCE

3/4 cup heavy whipping cream, divided
1 teaspoon chopped chives
1/2 teaspoon grated lemon zest
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large bowl, whisk eggs, cream, salt, pepper and lemon juice until frothy.

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon of the butter and swirl to coat pan. Pour in egg mixture and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring gently with a heatproof spatula, for about 2 minutes or until just set, yet the surface is still shiny. Allow the mixture to cool to just warm.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In small saucepan, melt remaining butter over low heat. Place phyllo on work surface and cover with a slightly damp tea towel. Lay 1 sheet of phyllo on work surface with 1 short side facing you and brush lightly with melted butter. Place second sheet on top and brush with butter. Starting about 2 inches from short side of sheet closest to you, spoon one quarter of the eggs in the center in a 4-by-3-inch rectangle with 1 long side facing you.

Sprinkle one quarter of the salmon on top of eggs and sprinkle with chives and lemon zest. Starting at edge closest to you, fold pastry over filling. Fold both long sides toward center and brush surface lightly with butter. Fold up into a rectangle loose packet. Don't make it too tight, because the eggs will puff up in the oven. Place the packet seam-side down on parchment-lined baking sheet. Brush strudel packets with more melted butter. Repeat to make 3 more strudels. At this point, you can make the strudels and refrigerate up to 12 hours.

To make lemon chive sauce, combine 1/2 cup of the cream with chives and lemon zest. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight. Cover and refrigerate remaining cream separately.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Bake strudels for about 15 minutes or until golden brown. Meanwhile, pour chive and lemon cream into a small saucepan and heat over medium-low heat, just until bubbles form around the edge. Remove from heat. Whip the remaining 1/4 cup cream until soft peaks form; whisk into hot cream mixture. Whisk in lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve strudels drizzled with Lemon Chive Sauce or with sauce on the side. Serve over a bed of frisee, mixed baby greens or with tomato slices.

*Adapted from Food and Drink magazine.
Tested by Susan Selasky for the Free Press
Test Kitchen.*



A sloppy Giuseppe (the classic sloppy Joe but with Italian accents like red wine, oregano, provolone and giardiniera) goes great with red wines like a Tuscan blend, a Rhone or a Rioja. *Photo by Bill Hogan/Chicago Tribune/TNS*

Rich red wines go great with beefy sloppy Joes

It may have “sloppy” in the name, but that doesn’t mean you have to slum it when thinking of wine pairings. Think of this recipe as sloppy Joes with an Italian accent, an updated take that skips a packet of seasoning for fresher, bolder flavors. Lush with ripe fruit flavors and darker notes of smoke, leather and pepper, hearty Old World wines help to elevate the experience, even as you reach for more napkins.

■ MAKE THIS

SLOPPY GIUSEPPES

Saute a finely chopped onion in 2 tablespoons olive oil until it begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped; cook, 1 minute. Add 1 pound ground beef, stirring it into the onions and breaking it up; cook until browned. Stir in 1/2 cup red wine, 1 can (14.5 ounces) Italian pear tomatoes, chopped, 1 tablespoon tomato paste, 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano, 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes and salt to taste. Cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened. Serve on rolls, topped with a slice of provolone and a generous helping of giardiniera. Makes: 6 servings

Recipe by Joe Gray

■ DRINK THIS

Pairings by sommelier Rachael Lowe of Spiaggia, as told to Michael Austin:

2014 Castello Colle Massari Rigoletto Montecucco Rosso, Tuscany, Italy: This Montecucco Rosso DOC wine is composed of 70 percent sangiovese plus a mixture of montepulciano and cilieggiolo grape varieties. It was aged in both stainless steel and used oak barrels, offering aromas of red cherry, orange pith and strawberry. Acidity balances the tomatoes and cuts through the fat of the beef, which is itself complemented by a hint of smoke.

2014 Alain Graillot Crozes-Hermitage, Rhone Valley, France: Graillot is the premier Crozes-Hermitage producer in the northern Rhone Valley, making focused yet varietally correct representations of the syrah grape variety. With notes of black pepper, smoked meat, black currant and raspberry, plus dried sage and thyme, this wine will not only balance the tomato and beef, but also counter the sweetness of the onion. It nicely complements the dish’s herb components.

2012 Hacienda Lopez de Haro Reserva, Rioja, Spain: This blend of tempranillo and graciano grape varieties spends 20 months in both French and American oak barrels, and then a further two years in the bottle. Its flavors of dill, vanilla, strawberry, macerated cranberries, and a hint of leather will play well with the beef and herbs. The ripe fruit flavors will also mellow the giardiniera, while the acidity will cut the provolone’s richness.

5 nutrition tips to maximize your workouts

nutrition

BY MAYO
CLINIC NEWS
NETWORK

Did you know when and what you eat can have an impact on your workout? Eating and exercise are connected.

According to Dr. John M. Murphy, Family Medicine, Mayo Clinic Health System, you can maximize the effectiveness of your workouts by using a few tips:

EAT A HEALTHY BREAKFAST

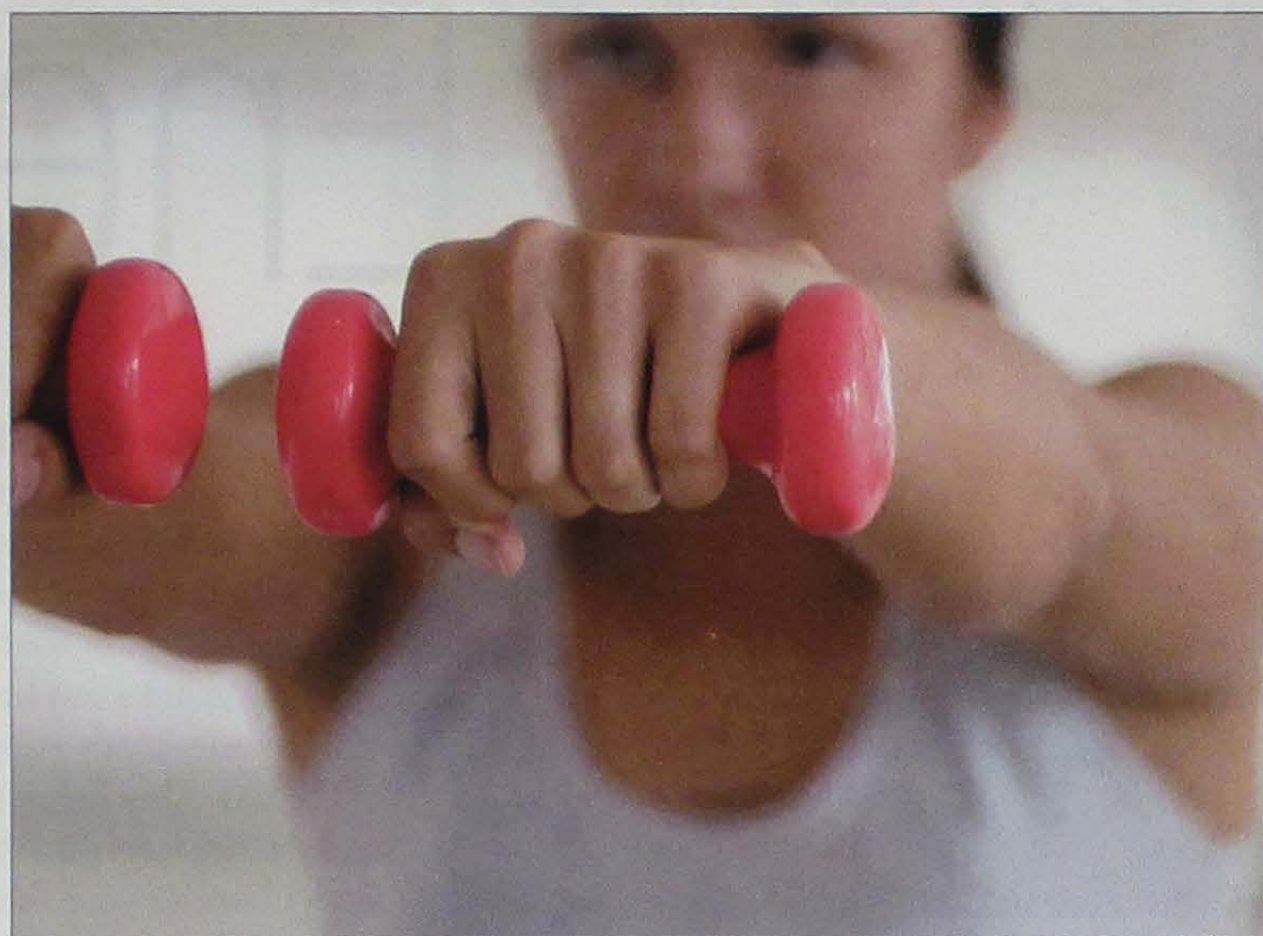
If you exercise in the morning, get up early enough to finish breakfast at least one hour before your workout. This will give you energy and raise your blood sugar. If you don't eat, you might feel sluggish or lightheaded when you exercise. Good breakfast options include whole-grain cereals or bread, bananas, and yogurt. A cup of coffee is OK, too. Emphasize carbohydrates for maximum energy.

SIZE MATTERS

You want to be careful not to overeat before exercise. Eat large meals at least three to four hours before exercising. Small meals should be eaten two to three hours before exercising. You can have small snacks an hour before exercising. Eating too much can leave you sluggish, and eating too little may not give you the energy to stay strong during your workout.

SNACK WELL

Most people can eat small snacks right before and during exercise. It's important to do what feels best for you. Snacks shortly before exercising probably won't give you an energy boost, but they can help maintain blood sugar levels and prevent distracting hunger pains. Good snack options include energy bars, yogurt,



What you eat can have an impact on your workout. Follow these tips to maximize their effectiveness. *Photo by Think-stock.com*

low-fat granola bars and peanut butter sandwiches.

EAT AFTER YOU EXERCISE


Eating after you exercise will help your muscles recover. If possible, within two hours, you'll want to eat a meal that contains protein and carbohydrates. Good post-workout food choices include yogurt and fruit, peanut butter sandwiches, pasta with meatballs and chicken with brown rice.

DRINK UP

Remember to drink fluids. You need adequate fluids before, during and after exercise to prevent dehydration. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends you drink two to three cups of water before your workout, half to one cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes during your workout, and two to three cups after your workout for every pound of weight you lose during the workout.


"The duration and intensity of your workout will determine how often and what you should eat and drink," says Murphy. "Pay attention to how you feel during your workout, as well as your

overall performance. Let your body guide you on which eating habits work best for you."




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The dining table had water damage from a house fire, and stored away for many years. The chairs were in pieces. Restored now, the table and chairs have many years of life again!

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BY AMY
CLARK
Contributing
Writer

Eating **FOR** Energy

This is the time of year where we seem to experience energy lows. With less daylight and Iowa's bitter cold, wintry days, it's no wonder that nothing sounds better than cozying up with a warm blanket and watching television when we get off work. But, what if I told you that what we eat and when we eat can truly help enhance our energy levels throughout the day?

Before revealing my top eating strategies to help build energy levels to get you through the work day feeling great, let's first review the definition of fatigue. According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, fatigue is weariness or exhaustion from labor, exertion or stress. Most people perceive fatigue as lack of mental alertness, weakened muscles and sleepiness. Main causes of fatigue include the aging process, certain disease states, stress, obesity, inadequate energy intake, inappropriate timing of meals and snacks, nutrient deficiencies, lack of exercise and inadequate sleep. It's important to take into count what in your lifestyle may be causing fatigue in the first place. And here are some ways to fine-tune your eating habits to enhance energy.

Meet your daily calorie needs. Skimping on calories ultimately decreases metabolic rate as the body tries to conserve energy, leaving a feeling of lethargy. To keep energy levels high and metabolism revved up, it is important to meet your daily calorie needs. Think of your car: It needs fuel to run efficiently. If your car did not receive adequate fuel, it may not be able to go the distance you need it to. Our bodies work the same; they require a certain amount of fuel from food each day to be efficient. To learn how many calories your body requires each day, visit your local Hy-Vee dietitian for advice and guidelines. These guidelines vary per individual and should be calculated based on height, weight, age, physical activity level and disease risk.

Start your day off with breakfast. You've probably heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Well, to boost your energy first thing in the morning, eating breakfast is top on the list. Think of your car once again. You wouldn't try to drive your car on an empty tank of gas — you'd never make it out of the driveway; so we make it a priority to fuel our cars. Breakfast is the perfect opportunity to fuel our bodies. For long-lasting energy, swap out donuts, pastries, high-sugar cereals and white breads/bagels with a whole grain (carbohydrate and

fiber), protein or healthy fat and fruit. Some good examples of this combination would be oatmeal with berries, walnuts and skim milk, or 100 percent whole-wheat bagel thin with nut butter and sliced strawberries sandwiched between.

Enjoy snacks two times per day to provide your body with a near-steady supply of food energy over the course of the day. This helps keep blood sugar levels in check and energy levels up. Discover the timing technique that works best for your lifestyle. Snacking gives your body the opportunity to receive the appropriate amount of vitamins and minerals it needs for good health. Snacking is a wonderful time to include dairy, such as Greek yogurt. Other energy-sustaining snack ideas include 1-ounce of nuts, fruit and string cheese, apple with peanut butter, dried edamame or dried chickpeas.

While carbohydrates are our body's primary source of energy, it's important to rethink which type we choose. A caffeinated soda, a latte or a candy bar often is chosen when people feel tired or lethargic. These simple carbohydrates may offer a quick energy boost, but will not sustain energy levels over time. An energy-enhancing tip would be to choose complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, beans, fruits and vegetables. Think of complex carbohydrates as time-release capsules. The energy boost they provide is slowed down by a natural "capsule" of fiber that slows the breakdown of sugar, providing a longer energy boost.

Incorporate a source of omega-3 fatty acids every day. Omega-3 fats are known to improve cognition. In turn, improved cognition, particularly mood, may help you feel more energized. Fatty fish including salmon, tuna, sardines, herring and lake trout are rich sources of omega-3 fats. You can also get omega-3 fats from plant sources such as chia seed, flax seed, canola oil, walnuts, walnut oil, omega-eggs, wheat germ and soyfoods.

Stay hydrated. Dehydration can cause headaches and fatigue, so it's important to drink water consistently throughout the day. To help increase your intake, keep a water bottle easily accessible at your work space. You could also set an appointment reminder in your work calendar or phone every hour to remind yourself to drink water. An overall water goal would be to drink at least 64 ounces per day of unsweetened, decaffeinated beverages, or, take your body weight in pounds and divide that by 2

(i.e. 150-lb person would need 75 ounces of water per day).

■ BAKED SALMON WITH GARLIC AND DIJON

Serves 4.

All You Need:

- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 large or 3 small cloves garlic, pressed
- 1 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 pounds salmon fillets

Lemon slices

All You Do:

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.

In a small bowl, mix together chopped parsley, garlic, Dijon mustard, salt, pepper, olive oil and lemon juice.

Slice salmon into even portions. Place skin side down on prepared baking sheet.

Generously brush all sides of salmon with sauce and top with fresh slices of lemon.

Bake at 450 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes or until just cooked through and flaky.

Source: NatashasKitchen.com

The information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a medical professional for individual advice. Amy Clark represents Hy-Vee as a nutrition expert working throughout the community to promote



Photo courtesy of NatashasKitchen.com

healthy eating and nutrition. Amy is a Registered and Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist and member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

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CAULIFLOWER CRUMBLES® "FRIED RICE"

Serves 8 (½ cup each) | Prep Time: 10 minutes

ALL YOU NEED:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 (16 oz) bag Green Giant™ Fresh Cauliflower Crumbles® "Fried Rice" Blend
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp Hoisin sauce
- 2 green onions, sliced

ALL YOU DO:

1. In a medium skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring frequently until garlic begins to brown.
2. Add "Fried Rice" Blend and garlic salt. Cook, stirring frequently, for 5 to 7 minutes until vegetables soften.
3. Stir in egg; stir constantly 2 to 3 minutes until egg is scrambled and incorporated into vegetables.
4. Stir in soy sauce and Hoisin sauce; mix well.
5. Garnish with green onions.

Nutrition per serving: 50 calories, 2.5g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 480mg sodium, 5g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 3g sugars, 2g protein.
Daily Values: 20% vitamin A, 40% vitamin C, 2% calcium, 2% iron.

Source: adapted from Green Giant™

This information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a medical professional for individual advice.